UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CN.10/PV.163
29 April 1992

ENGLISH

DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 20 April 1992, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ERDOS (Hungary)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

The CHAIRMAN: I declare open - on this Easter Monday - the 163rd meeting, the first of the 1992 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission.

Let me begin our proceedings by extending a warm and sincere welcome to all delegations attending the 1992 session of the Commission. I have no doubt that every one shares my hope and expectation that the coming weeks will be characterized by a spirit of friendly cooperation and productive accommodation of views, both in this plenum and in the Working Groups.

I wish to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt congratulations to the representatives of those States which became members of the United Nations only a short while ago, and which are attending a session of the Disarmament Commission for the first time. We offer them every assistance so that we can all benefit from their contribution to our common objectives.

May I also avail myself of this opportunity to tell representatives that I feel honoured and privileged to have been elected to this post, which I consider an opportunity for your Chairman and his country, the Republic of Hungary, better to serve this body and the community of nations. I shall do my best to help the Commission accomplish the tasks ahead of us.

At the Commission's organizational meeting I promised, and today I wish to repeat that promise, that I would try to live up to the high standards that my predecessor in this Chair, Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner of Austria, had established.

I also want to congratulate the Chairmen of the Working Groups, numbering three at present: Ambassador Carl-Magnus Hyltenius of Sweden, Ambassador Prakash Shah of India and Ambassador Ricardo Luna of Peru.

(The Chairman)

As regards the fourth Working Group, I have to inform the Commission that consultations are continuing within the Group of African States with the aim of nominating a colleague from the African Group to head that Working Group, which is on science and technology. I wish to express my confidence that our African colleagues will be able to come up with a person who will be able to lead the Working Group on the question of science and technology throughout this substantive session. I also appeal to our African colleagues to wind up their consultations as soon as possible and inform us of the results, because we are fully aware that the key to progress in our work is held by the four Chairmen of the subsidiary bodies.

It is a particular pleasure for me to welcome in our midst the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky. He has been known for long for his conviction about, and devotion to, the cause of promoting the arduous process of arms control and disarmament. On behalf of the members of the Commission, and also on my own behalf, I wish him well in his new and important post. We all look forward to profiting from his guidance, and also from the invaluable assistance of his colleagues in the Secretariat.

The 1992 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission is opening at a particular phase of developments and transformations on the international scene, which constitutes a watershed period in the history of the United Nations as well. The momentous events that are taking place in the world and the enormous challenges accompanying them raise ever-new hopes and ever-new frustrations. I feel confident that the members of the Commission are fully determined to exploit every chance offered by the improving international climate, and will not be deterred by occasional difficulties.

(The Chairman)

We may say with all justification that the world is moving closer to a new quality of international relations. However, events last year in the Persian Gulf, and more recent events in Europe and elsewhere, serve as a constant reminder that the new world, the long-envisaged system of collective security do not come into existence by themselves, and even progress along the road does not automatically guarantee the maintenance of peace, security and justice.

In his inaugural statement before the General Assembly, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the new Secretary-General of the United Nations, spoke about four basic issues which - in his view - "confront the international community" (A/46/PV.59, p. 12). Now that we are about to embark on a new attempt to promote solutions to some of the outstanding issues, we should recall that the very first of those issues

> "is the need to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security in conformity with the Charter". (ibid.)

It would be very difficult, I would say even impossible, not to agree fully with the Secretary-General when he emphasizes the need to find "adequate means to defuse" crises and to "prevent their escalation" (ibid.). What better, more effective and practical means are there to achieve those goals than measures of arms control, arms limitation and disarmament? Those are the issues on which the United Nations Disarmament Commission is mandated to conduct in-depth deliberations with a view to finding and submitting concrete recommendations. Those are the issues which the four Working Groups are clearly mandated to deal with.

The new and fundamentally reformed Disarmament Commission is not really a product of the improved international climate, but was actually born parallel

(The Chairman)

to it. The 1991 session was in fact the first substantive session where all the elements of the reform programme were put into practice. While not every one of the four substantive agenda items served equally well the declared objective of conducting in-depth deliberations and achieving concrete recommendations, the work of the Disarmament Commission as a whole is considered to be successful. Considerable progress was achieved on a number of important and often contested items, and thus there is every hope that concrete results will not evade us this year.

One of the four items is already in its third year. Consequently, Working Group I, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Hyltenius, will have to launch a real, concentrated effort to come up with a final report on objective information on military matters. The Commission, and thus the Working Group, is expected to draw up relevant principles and guidelines, and, preferably, a set of concrete recommendations.

The other three Working Groups started their deliberations only last year, and reached agreement on compilations of various elements which now serve as fairly solid ground to build on. With further efforts and full utilization of the time available to the Groups, the already existing material could very well be developed to a level that would permit a final assault in 1993, the third and last year for those agenda items.

There is general agreement among delegations that the short period at our disposal must be fully utilized. Since all the four subsidiary bodies have already passed the stage where the ground has been broken, work in the Groups should not start anew from scratch. Instead of general discussions, they all have to focus on substantive questions. A short recapitulation of the situation is, of course, normal and may prove to be useful, but it should not

(The Chairman)

take up more than the first one or two meetings. The Chairman's papers also serve as very pertinent ground for a quick start, and the fairly great number of working papers also help in that endeavour.

In great moments of historic transformation, fundamental changes are required of individuals, delegations and governments alike. Changes in attitudes, changes in concepts and also changes in negotiating methods are called for. Instead of repeating fossilized views, delegations are now invited to concentrate more on the areas, no matter how narrow some of them might seem at first, where views offer a chance of possible agreement.

In the second year of this reinvigorated Disarmament Commission, we all should show signs of our ability to live up to the new expectations and requirements of our era. Today, the questions on our agenda have all left the realm of impossible dreams and have already become an organic part of feasible and realistic objectives. The 1992 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission is here to prove this.

I now call on Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

Mr. PETROVSKY: I should like to start by thanking you, Mr. Chairman, for the words of welcome you spoke in connection with my appointment as Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

It is both an honour and a great responsibility to deal with disarmament issues at the time of the creation of the new world order, which is the system of peace, security and cooperation based on the principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations.

(Mr. Petrovsky)

The world is emerging today from the shadows of past confrontations and moving progressively towards a new situation characterized by the increasing hopes for greater peace and security. Against the backdrop of this new situation, it is indeed incumbent upon the international community to seize this opportunity accorded by the United Nations for contributing towards the promotion and the enhancement of this process. The momentum that has been generated should not be allowed to dissipate but should serve the unique role that the world Organization can play in promoting disarmament and preserving peace. In this context, the full range of the disarmament machinery of the United Nations - the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and other bodies - should be utilized in a more constructive and innovative manner to advance these objectives further as well as to improve the machinery and procedures for dealing with disarmament questions. It is imperative that these bodies direct their efforts in a manner commensurate with the new challenges and demands that confront the United Nations. I assure the Commission that we in the Secretariat are ready to assist it in searching for solutions to problems that may arise in the course of its deliberations at this session.

(Mr. Petrovsky)

I am confident that in this spirit this body will also endeavour to tackle the important issues that are now before it. As is generally recognized, the Disarmament Commission is a specialized, deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery that allows for in-depth deliberations on specific and priority disarmament issues leading to the submission of specific recommendations.

In this regard, the four substantive items that form part of your present agenda call for a renewed sense of dedication and determination that will enable the Commission not only to conclude its work on each of those items within the prescribed time-frame, but also to make practical recommendations and achieve tangible results as we re-examine traditional approaches to multilateral activities.

Mr. Chairman, as the Commission embarks on this crucial task under your able guidance, I should like to take this opportunity to extend the best wishes of the Secretary-General and all the staff to all of you for the successful completion of your work.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The CHAIRMAN: As members of the Commission may recall, at our organizational session, held on 3 December last year, we tentatively approved the provisional agenda before the Commission. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the provisional agenda before it, contained in document A/CN.10/L.30.

The agenda was adopted.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: As members may recall, in 1990 the Disarmament Commission adopted by consensus a text on reform measures, entitled "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission", which was contained in document A/CN.10/137. The implementation of these reform measures was duly reflected in the organizational arrangements for this current substantive session at the Commission's organizational session in December last year.

Let me recall these arrangements for you. They included: firstly, the approval of the provisional agenda; secondly, the establishment of four working groups on the four substantive agenda items; thirdly, the appointment of chairmen for the working groups - here again, I have to remind you of the pending decision of the African Group on the fourth working group -; fourthly, decision on the date and duration of the 1992 substantive session; and, fifthly, a general programme of work for the current session.

In complying with the spirit of the reform programme, chairmen of the established working groups have effectively utilized the off-session period for various types of informal consultations on their respective agenda items among the interested delegations, and I am convinced that these pre-session consultations have greatly facilitated the substantive work of the current session.

In view of the limited time available to the Commission, it was a general understanding that there should be a limited general exchange of views, allowing delegations to make statements on any or all agenda items. In this regard, four meetings are allocated to such purposes, as indicated in the general programme of work and the weekly timetable which have been

(The Chairman)

circulated. I would urge those delegations wishing to make general statements to inscribe their names on the list of speakers with the Secretariat as soon as possible. The deadline for such inscriptions is 1 p.m. today.

I should also like to ask that each delegation, before making a statement in plenary meeting, provide the Secretariat with 25 copies of the text.

If I hear no requests to speak, and if there is no objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to proceed in this manner.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: As to the allocation of time for each agenda item, the principle of equal footing and flexibility will, for practical purposes, be observed, and the Secretariat will issue a weekly timetable for the programme of work during the session, taking into account the needs of each subsidiary body through consultations with the chairmen of the working groups. However, a general programme of work for the entire session (A/CN.10/1992/CRP.1) has been agreed and circulated as an indicative timetable for the work of the Commission, obviously subject to further ajustments as necessary.

The Secretariat has prepared and distributed the working timetable for the first week of the session as an experimental exercise, in accordance with a decision by the Bureau. As pointed out earlier, the programme of work for the second and third weeks will be discussed and decided by the Bureau in consultation with the chairmen of the working groups this coming Friday. In order to utilize efficiently the available conference resources, I appeal to all members of the Disarmament Commission to be punctual in attending all the scheduled meetings of the Commission.

(The Chairman)

As regards the documentation of the session, I wish to point out that last year's report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly (A/46/42), as well as documents listed in the report - particularly the Chairman's papers in the annexes - will serve as important background documents for this session. Of course, previous reports of the Commission will also be useful for reference.

Since there are four items on which there will be intensive deliberations at this session, the Commission may have before it a number of working papers submitted by delegations on those subjects. I would urge those delegations to submit their papers to the Secretariat as soon as possible for processing.

(The Chairman)

With respect to the status of the non-governmental organizations, as was the case in previous years, non-governmental organizations are welcome to attend the plenary meetings and the meetings of the Committee of the Whole of the Disarmament Commission as observers.

Having considered the logistics for our session and the various aspects of the organization of work, I should like now to call on those delegations that wish to make general statements on various subjects contained in the agenda at this stage.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): Sir, it is with particular pleasure that I speak today at a time when the Disarmament Commission is starting its 1992 substantive session under your chairmanship. I have had the pleasure of knowing you for many years and I know that the Commission will be in very competent hands.

I avail myself of this opportunity to welcome the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, and to congratulate him on his appointment. I should also like to pay a tribute to his predecessor, Ambassador Hohenfellner of Austria, for the excellent manner in which he guided the work of the Commission last year. I am convinced, Sir, that this effective stewardship will continue this year under your skilful and experienced chairmanship. Your skill and experience were demonstrated, inter alia, last year when you led the work on objective information on military matters. I can assure you that I shall do my best to carry that work forward and I am sure that you share my hope that it will be brought to a successful conclusion this year.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

The end of the cold war and East-West divisions has led to dramatic changes, not only in Europe, but in the whole world. The prospects for disarmament and arms limitation have improved considerably. The issues of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons have increasingly come into focus and are now priorities on the international agenda and considered essential for maintaining peace and security.

These developments have also given the United Nations a new role and new possibilities. This was demonstrated at the Security Council meeting on 31 January this year, at the level of Heads of State and Government, where disarmament and non-proliferation issues were highlighted.

The year 1991 stands out as a most remarkable year in disarmament. For the first time in history, an agreement was reached to reduce the arsenals of strategic nuclear weapons. The START Treaty last summer was followed in the autumn by important unilateral decisions in Washington and Moscow towards further reductions of the levels of nuclear armament. In addition to this, Washington and Moscow, in January this year, made additional important unilateral commitments to disarmament.

These welcome developments have given us a new setting for our deliberations on disarmament and non-proliferation.

The work of the United Nations Disarmament Commission has been considerably vitalized as a result of a reformed and more focused agenda. During this session, we can benefit from the thorough deliberations undertaken last year, and we can continue efforts to reach consensus in the four working groups.

Before I address the tasks ahead in those groups I would like to offer some remarks on the working methods of this Commission.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

The work of the Disarmament Commission is based on the principle of consensus. Consensus does not preclude open debate and fruitful discussions. Nevertheless, it assumes shared responsibility and a joint commitment to common results. This is particularly the case when agreement is reached among an overwhelming majority of States. Thus, I trust that we will all take part in the discussions in a spirit of cooperation and demonstrate that this forum can play a truly constructive role in disarmament.

During the three weeks to come, we will concentrate our work on four essential topics: objective information on military matters, the process of nuclear disarmament, a regional approach to disarmament, and science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament.

As regards the first item, we should now look for consensus on concrete recommendations on general guidelines. I hope it will be possible to conclude our deliberations on the basis of the paper introduced last year by the Chairman of Working Group I, presented "on [his] own responsibility as a working tool". The paper covers four main issues: objectives, principles, scope and mechanisms.

Our discussions this year can be influenced in a positive way by the increased openness and transparency in the nuclear field demonstrated by the major military Powers. The discussions can also be positively affected by the progress under way in the European region, where the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process has strengthened measures of confidence-building.

In this context, I should like to mention that Sweden will continue to provide the United Nations with information on military matters, including figures on military budgets and data on exports of military equipment. It is

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

essential that all countries provide such data. All fields of military activities should be covered by this openness.

The newly established universal register for international trade in heavy conventional weapons - later to be expanded - is a new important instrument which will promote increased openness, transparency and confidence in order to facilitate disarmament.

As regards Working Group II, a number of encouraging events can be reflected under the four sub-items in this area: the relationship between nuclear disarmament, peace and security; steps taken in the process of nuclear disarmament; strengthening the process of nuclear disarmament; and the role of the United Nations in the process of nuclear disarmament.

The process has indeed been reinforced since the previous session of the Disarmament Commission beginning with the signing of the START agreement in Moscow last year and with far-reaching unilateral declarations aiming at lower levels of nuclear armament. These declarations demonstrate a readiness among the major Powers to assume greater responsibility for creating a world in which the threat of nuclear war is considerably reduced.

Now ratification of the START Treaty and concrete action is urgently required. It is Sweden's hope that we soon shall see a prompt removal and destruction of nuclear arms in accordance with the START Treaty and the far-reaching unilateral declarations made by the United States and the former Soviet Union and Russia.

The international community expects that nuclear issues in the Commonwealth of Independent States will not be pursued to improve bargaining positions for States where nuclear weapons are deployed. Thus, we hope for a cooperative spirit on the part of the States concerned and encourage Ukraine,

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

Belarus and Kazakhstan to join the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as non-nuclear-weapon States as early as possible.

My Government is pleased to note that China has ratified the NPT and welcomes the announcement that France will also soon adhere to the Treaty.

Non-proliferation and the importance of strengthening and extending the Non-Proliferation Treaty as long as possible after 1995 is of the utmost importance. These are questions which have gained particular importance in view of events in the Commonwealth of Independent States and other areas during the last 12 months.

A comprehensive nuclear-test ban remains a priority among nuclear issues. Sweden has presented a draft proposal for a treaty and looks forward to a sincere and constructive treatment of this matter in the Conference on Disarmament.

In this context, I would like to express Sweden's satisfaction at the announcement by France of a moratorium on further underground testing during 1992.

All in all, I trust that our discussions on this agenda item can be constructive and that a foundation can be laid for concluding our deliberations on this matter next year.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

The third substantive issue on our agenda covers regional disarmament. It is our understanding from consultations preceeding this session that the Chairman of Working Group III intends to focus the discussions on the relationship between regional disarmament and global security and arms limitation and disarmament, as well as principles and guidelines. The other topics will be taken up if time permits. I believe that this approach is a wise one, given the wide scope of the subject-matter.

Regional disarmament is required to promote global disarmament - and vice versa. The two issues are two sides of the same problem. The importance of regional disarmament has been further highlighted by tensions and instability in and between nations in the new Commonwealth of Independent States.

There are no universal solutions as regards regional disarmament. They can take many forms, as shown in Europe by the process of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). It is to be hoped that lessons learned in that process could help and inspire other regions. It is encouraging that increased transparency and openness in Europe are setting new patterns for cooperation among nations in the region, some of which have been adversaries for decades or even centuries.

In order to promote confidence-building measures, appropriate verification instruments should be used in a more systematic manner, at both the regional and global levels. Such instruments should also cover the seas and outer space.

In the Working Group IV, discussions will focus on science and technology for disarmament. During the last session of the Commission, Sweden and many other countries stressed the importance of using science and technology for the benefit of disarmament. Technology in itself is neutral, although it can be used for both constructive and destructive purposes. Verification techniques - including the seismic competence employed by my country and

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others to detect nuclear testing - are examples of positive contributions of science and technology to disarmament.

The conversion of military resources to civilian needs may, given the political changes in many regions, be another area where science and technology can be used to promote disarmament.

In order to strengthen non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, formal agreements and control regimes have become a necessity. They are in themselves not a guarantee against the spread of weapons of mass destruction. It is Sweden's firm view that export controls of this type are not to be regarded as arbitrary barriers to trade. These controls are for surveillance purposes and should not be detrimental to those who need technology and technological products for peaceful purposes. As a nation truly dependent on foreign trade Sweden has no intention to erect unnecessary barriers, nor any interest in so doing.

It is my sincere hope that we will successfully conclude our deliberations on the first substantive item on our agenda during this session and be in a position to select a new item to be dealt with during the three years 1993-1995.

As I emphasized at the outset, the issues of non-proliferation have moved to the top of the agenda for disarmament and arms limitation. It is therefore very topical that informal consultations are being conducted in Geneva regarding the possible role of the Conference on Disarmament in this context. It seems to my delegation that the Disarmament Commission should also have a role to play in this matter, as there is a need to elaborate general guidelines on non-proliferation. The Commission has, as will be recalled, been charged with similar tasks in regard to other issues, most recently regarding objective information on military matters.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

The problems of non-proliferation concern both conventional arms and weapons of mass destruction, but the latter pose a more serious threat than the former. This view is also in consonance with established priorities in the field of multilateral disarmament and arms limitation.

Against this background the Swedish delegation proposes that a new item be added to the agenda of the Disarmament Commission, namely General guidelines for non-proliferation, with special emphasis on weapons of mass destruction.

I hope that this proposal will be favourably considered and eventually adopted by the General Assembly.

The CHAIRMAN: I share the confidence of the representative of Sweden that this year we shall be able to conduct a substantive session not only in words but in deeds.

Mr. Chong-Ha YOO (Republic of Korea): On behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Korea, may I congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the current session of the Disarmament Commission and thank you also for your kind words welcoming new members. We are confident that your well-proven leadership and expertise in the work of the United Nations, especially in the area of disarmament, will guide our deliberations to a successful end. I join the representative of Sweden in congratulating Mr. Petrovsky on his appointment as Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and have confidence that he will perform his duties capably and effectively commensurate with the importance of his job at this critical juncture in the role of the United Nations. As this is the first time that my delegation participates in the work of the Commission as a full member, I assure you, Sir, of our utmost cooperation and support.

The current session of the Disarmament Commission takes place at a time of momentous change in international relations at the global, regional and

(Mr. Yoo, Republic of Korea)

local levels. The end of the cold war has brought with it many new challenges and opportunities in the fields of disarmament and international security. The statement made at the Security Council meeting of 31 January 1992, at the level of Heads of State and Government, underlined this point, particularly with respect to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

My delegation wishes to express its satisfaction that the new reform measures adopted by consensus by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session have allowed the Commission to focus on the four substantive agenda items of high priority. These measures have already provided a useful framework for our deliberation.

As we enter the second year of deliberations since the initiation of the reforms, my delegation is hopeful that the Commission, through collective efforts, will be able to function more effectively, thereby making substantial progress in the discussion of the items before us.

In recent years, the importance of exchanging objective information on military matters is receiving growing recognition. In this period of global transition following the cold war, this subject takes on even greater significance as a central element of confidence- and security-building measures.

Since the uncertainty and unpredictability inherent in international relations, particularly in regions of high tension and conflict, constitute a main source of instability, the importance of openness and transparency in the military area cannot be overemphasized.

The provision, compilation and exchange of objective information on military matters will certainly increase the level of openness and transparency, and thus contribute to easing tension among States and strengthening regional and global security. In this regard, we were pleased

(Mr. Yoo, Republic of Korea)

to witness several recent initiatives taken at the unilateral, bilateral and regional levels.

With regard to the Disarmament Commission's work this year, my delegation believes that the previous Chairman's text on "Guidelines for objective information on military matters", contained in the Commission's report, will serve as an important basis for further discussion. Since this is the final year in which to conclude our deliberations on this subject, we sincerely hope that our unsparing efforts will produce a finalized consensus text.

Within the United Nations, some important initiatives have already been taken in this regard. The annual reporting system on military expenditures has been established, and many Member States submit their reports according to this system.

Last year, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/36 L, which calls for the establishment of a universal and non-discriminatory register of international arms transfers. In accordance with that resolution, the register was established at the United Nations in January of this year. In view of the worthy intentions for establishing the register and of the overwhelming support for the resolution, my delegation looks forward to universal participation in the register so that it may properly serve as a global confidence- and security-building measure.

My Government, in its effort to contribute to confidence-building in our part of the world, has annually issued a white paper on national defence since 1988. The paper contains, inter alia, our defence policy, military budget and military capabilities, both human and material. We are also preparing to submit information on our military expenditures in accordance with the United Nations standardized reporting system.

(Mr. Yoo, Republic of Korea)

The Republic of Korea attaches great importance to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects. While the progress in nuclear disarmament is not yet satisfactory and has yet to be accelerated, we welcome several positive developments which have taken place in recent years at the global, regional and bilateral levels.

My country also welcomes the unilateral initiatives on the reduction of nuclear arsenals, particularly those taken by the leaders of the United States and the Russian Federation, respectively, in January of this year, in addition to their previous initiatives taken last year.

(Mr. Yoo, Republic of Korea)

Since these two countries bear special responsibilities, we hope that they will further endeavour to transform the decades-long nuclear arms race into a disarmament race.

With respect to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, we cannot overemphasize the importance of the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty and the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). My Government believes that the non-proliferation Treaty constitutes a cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and has contributed significantly to international peace and security. In this regard, we welcome the recent accession of many States to the Treaty, including that of China last month. With the forthcoming adherence of France, we move ever closer to the goal of universal adherence to the non-proliferation Treaty.

While a new international environment has made possible significant strides towards alleviating the threat of a nuclear holocaust, the rapid transformation in the political map of the Eurasian continent and the recent Gulf War have caused new concerns regarding problems with the maintenance of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The Gulf War in particular highlighted the following problems with regard to the current nuclear non-proliferation regime: the limited scope of the existing safeguards system administered by the IAEA; the inability of satellite reconnaissance and other national technical means of verification to detect undeclared nuclear facilities; and the limitation of national export controls.

In this regard, my Government welcomes the ongoing efforts of the IAEA to strengthen its safeguards system and recalls that the Agency reaffirmed its right to undertake special inspections during its Board of Governors meeting this past February. We also take note of the statement of the Security Council issued at the conclusion of the summit meeting in January that the

(Mr. Yoo, Republic of Korea)

Council would take appropriate measures in the case of any violations notified to it by the IAEA.

As bipolar confrontation at the global level recedes, growing attention is being focused on approaches to disarmament. Given the pertinence and timeliness of the subject, the agenda item "regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security" aroused considerable interest among delegations at last year's session. Such widespread interest resulted in a compilation of important elements on the issue, reflected in the Chairman's paper annexed to the Commission's report to the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

While divergent views and varied constructive proposals have been put forward, we are nevertheless able to identify some common elements. In this regard, my delegation views last year's General Assembly resolution 46/36 F, entitled "Regional disarmament, including confidence-building measures" - a resolution which was adopted by consensus - as a guide post.

The resolution, which my country had the privilege to co-sponsor, provides, inter alia, that, first, the regional and global approaches to disarmament complement each other; secondly, the regional approach to disarmament is one of the essential elements in the global process of disarmament; thirdly, it is important that regional disarmament measures are taken at the initiative of States of the region and with the participation of all States concerned, taking into account the specific characteristics of each region; and fourthly, confidence-building measures are important in ensuring the success of this process. In addition to the above-mentioned elements, we would like to emphasize that regional arrangements should be determined freely by the States concerned in the region.

(Mr. Yoo, Republic of Korea)

In this regard, many ideas have recently been put forward concerning the possibility of applying the process of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe on regional disarmament to the Asia-Pacific region.

In our view, however, it may be still premature to apply the European experience directly to the Asia-Pacific region, owing, among other things, to the political, economic and cultural diversity of the region, as well as the contextual differences of inter-State relations. For this reason, we see merit in the evolutionary approach to regional disarmament in our part of the world, an approach which starts with confidence-building measures and the improvement of political and other relations among the States concerned.

In line with what I have mentioned above, my delegation is pleased to report to this Commission on the recent developments on the Korean Peninsula. After a series of difficult negotiations, South and North Korea reached two important Agreements which could mark a breakthrough in their long-standing confrontation since the division of the Korean Peninsula. These are the "Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-Aggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation between the South and the North" and the "Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula". Both Agreements came into force in February this year.

The Reconciliation Agreement, which we refer to as the Basic Agreement, provides, among other things, for the recognition of each other's system, renunciation of the use of force and armed aggression, confidence-building and arms-control measures, economic cooperation, exchange of people and the establishment of various bodies that will implement the follow-up measures. This Agreement, if implemented in good faith, will serve as a basic charter that will promote peaceful coexistence between South and North Korea with the ultimate goal of unification.

(Mr. Yoo, Republic of Korea)

The Joint Denuclearization Declaration follows my Government's "Special Announcement of a Nuclear-free Korean Peninsula" of last December and its "Non-Nuclear Korean Peninsula Peace Initiative" of the preceding month. The Joint Declaration commits the two parts of Korea not to produce, receive, possess, store, deploy or use nuclear weapons. It also includes the pledges of both parties not to have nuclear reprocessing and uranium enrichment facilities, which represents a major complement to an IAEA type of safeguards agreement.

To verify the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, both parties agreed to conduct mutual inspections in accordance with procedures to be determined by the Joint Nuclear Control Commission. It was agreed during the recent meetings of that Commission that the first mutual inspection would be conducted by early June.

The most immediate task which remains to be worked out is an agreement on the procedures and modalities of mutual inspection, which would provide more in-depth and comprehensive inspection than is allowed for in the IAEA arrangements. My Government has proposed to submit both civilian and military facilities to mutual inspections under the principle of reciprocity. Our proposal is based on the firm belief that, without an effective and reliable inspection regime, such agreement cannot function properly. We are looking forward to an early agreement on the implementation of the mutual inspection as set forth in the Joint Declaration.

My delegation cannot fail to mention the importance of North Korea's recent ratification of the IAEA safeguards agreement. Despite a six-year delay, we welcome North Korea's signing and ratifying of the safeguards agreement with IAEA which we hope will be followed by immediate inspection.

(Mr. Yoo, Republic of Korea)

We have no illusion that the implementation of all these agreements with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will be free of difficulties in the paths ahead. But once multilateral and bilateral arrangements with regard to nuclear inspection have been fully agreed upon and implemented to the satisfaction of the parties concerned, this will not only lay a firm ground for greater confidence-building measures on the Korean Peninsula, but could also set an important example for other regions with similar conditions.

During last year's session, different aspects of the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields were identified during the course of discussion. While some delegations focused on the negative impact of science and technology on the international security environment, other delegations pointed to their positive aspects, such as verification, weapons disposal, restructuring of former weapons industries and protection of the environment.

It is true that, until very recently, scientific and technological fields were often the sites of cold war confrontation, where all too many efforts focused on the development of ever-more sophisticated weapons and thereby merely propelled the arms race spiral.

(Mr. Yoo, Republic of Korea)

Now, in a new world of reconciliation and cooperation, we should use our scientific knowledge and technical expertise to enhance the well-being of humankind and to reduce real and perceived threats. Science and technology are becoming inherent elements in the comprehensive search for a new international order of peace, security and cooperation.

My delegation firmly believes that this is the most opportune time to discuss ways and means of accelerating the process of disarmament, and that this Commission can serve as both a catalyst and a clearing-house of ideas. My delegation stands ready to play its necessary part in achieving concrete results.

The CHAIRMAN: The statement that we have just heard from the representative of the Republic of Korea gives me the opportunity to recall that the Republic of Korea and the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea have recently joined the United Nations family. We extend a welcome to them. We are ready to cooperate with both countries most closely during the Commission's substantive session.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: I remind delegations that there is a deadline of 1 p.m. today for the inscription of names on the speakers' list. I invite delegations that may be ready to speak earlier than they had planned to do so in order to help us rebalance our list of speakers; the list today is rather short, but tomorrow we shall have quite a number of statements to listen to. Therefore, it will make our lives easier if delegations that felt ready to do so would consider advancing the time for making their statements from tomorrow to this afternoon.

(The Chairman)

I remind the Group of African States that it has to come up with their nomination for Chairman of Working Group IV.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.

UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CN.10/PV.164
29 April 1992

ENGLISH

DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 20 April 1992, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. ERDOS (Hungary)

- Statement by the Chairman
- Organization of work
- General exchange of views (continued)
- Programme of work

This record is subject to correction.

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Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to appeal to representatives to arrive for meetings more or less on time. I know that I shall not be able to change the world here, but I shall try as much as I can to ensure that the meetings start more or less at the scheduled hour and minute.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: As representatives will recall, at the Disarmament Commission's organizational meeting held on 3 December last year, the Commission established four working groups, on the four substantive agenda items, and appointed the respective chairmen of those groups.

As I mentioned this morning, the Chairman elected for Working Group IV, on agenda item 7, regarding the role of science and technology, will not be able to assume that chairmanship for this session, owing to certain unexpected circumstances. As a result of consultations among members of the Group of African States, I am pleased to report that that Group has decided to nominate Ambassador Emeka Ayo Azikiwe of Nigeria to the post of Chairman of Working Group IV.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that it is the wish of the Disarmament Commission to appoint Ambassador Azikiwe of Nigeria as Chairman of Working Group IV of the Commission for the 1992 session.

It was so decided.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. REINO (Portugal): Speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, I have the honour to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the important office of Chairman of the 1992 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. This election shows that the Commission recognized your remarkable work and excellent results in chairing last year's Working Group I, thus contributing to ensuring a positive result of the Commission's work as a whole and to enhancing its functioning. In this respect the Twelve would like also to recall the role played by last year's Chairman of the Commission in the implementation, for the first time, of an agenda reduced rationally to four items.

(Mr. Reino, Portugal)

This new pattern permitted a good and workmanlike mood, and now the agenda can be dealt with in a more constructive way. The Twelve will strive for a positive discussion and for the efficient accomplishment of our work within the timeframe and agenda specified in the reform programme.

A new positive atmosphere and attitude towards arms control and disarmament have emerged, owing to the new climate prevailing in international relations. This change enabled the work of the First Committee of the most recent General Assembly session to be very fruitful, with some resolutions of major importance being adopted. Events since last year's session of the Disarmament Commission have confirmed - if confirmation was necessary - the need for restraint and transparency on military matters.

The European Community and its member States are confident that transparency benefits all, does not limit States' own security and plays a vital role in the achievement of agreements in this area. Proof of this emerging confidence was the overwhelming vote at last year's session of the General Assembly in favour of resolution 46/36 L, submitted by the Twelve and Japan, on transparency in armaments. When duly implemented, this resolution will provide the Secretary-General with a universal and non-discriminatory Register of Conventional Arms open for consultation by all States as the first step towards enhanced transparency in the field of conventional arms.

The Twelve are greatly encouraged by the progress so far achieved at the meetings of the panel of governmental experts and look forward to the elaboration of the technical procedures necessary for the operation of the Register, thus enabling all States to provide data in due time, in accordance with the provisions set out in the annex to resolution 46/36 L.

(Mr. Reino, Portugal)

As to the illicit arms trade the Twelve welcome resolution 46/36 H, on international arms transfers, and remind participants that, according to operative paragraph 10, the decision whether to include this issue in next year's agenda must be taken during the present session of the Disarmament Commission.

The European Community and its members also look forward to further cooperation with the newly independent States of the former Soviet Union on all aspects of non-proliferation and on compliance with and adherence to existing and future regimes of arms control and disarmament agreements.

The Twelve wish to emphasize the positive outcome of the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, in particular the enhancement and extension of existing confidence-building measures and the recognition of the fact that an effective verification regime could strengthen the Convention. In this respect they look forward to positive results from the work of the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts to identify and examine potential verification measures from a scientific and technical standpoint. They are encouraged by the results of the first meeting of this Group.

As regards chemical weapons, the European Community and its member States attach the utmost importance to the conclusion within this year of a global, comprehensive chemical weapons convention with a satisfactory verification regime, and are fully committed to finalizing such a convention in time for presentation to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. Community member States are actively engaged in promoting this goal, both in Geneva and in their capitals. They also note with great satisfaction that a large number of States - as well as the Twelve themselves - have expressed their intention

(Mr. Reino, Portugal)

to be among the original signatories to the chemical weapons convention and urge all other States to proceed likewise.

It was with the aim of confidence-building through transparency that objective information on military matters was proposed as an agenda item for the Disarmament Commission. This will be the first item to have reached the final stage of a new three-year period for consideration.

The Twelve believe that the Chairman's paper of 1991 offers a good basis for a full debate and the adoption by consensus of a set of guidelines for recommendation to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

Of the other agenda items, regional disarmament is already recognized by the Disarmament Commission as one of the essential elements in global efforts.

The European Community and its member States consider that regional disarmament is a most effective measure by which States can contribute to international security and should be aimed at keeping military forces at the lowest level consistent with the requirements of self-defence.

The Twelve believe that the Working Group report and the Chairman's paper of May 1991 provide a useful starting-point for the 1992 discussion. The European Community and its member States also believe that agreements at the regional level will prove a useful complement to bilateral and multilateral negotiations.

Examples of this are the recent agreements in Angola, the ongoing talks in Rome aimed at achieving peace in Mozambique and current peace operations in El Salvador.

In the field of regional arms control, the process of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) could serve as an interesting point of reference for other regions.

(Mr. Reino, Portugal)

The European Community and its member States support wholeheartedly the commitment of the participants in the 1A negotiations of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) to reach - in connection with its entry into force - an agreement to limit the personnel strength of the conventional armed forces within the area of application in time for the Helsinki summit meeting to be held at the end of the CSCE meeting.

In this context, the European Community and its member States attach great importance to the Vienna Document of 1992 and to the open skies Treaty, both adopted last month, which will contribute significantly to further confidence-building in Europe and beyond.

Other developments are also welcomed by the European Community and its member States, such as recent initiatives in the denuclearization of Africa, in particular South Africa's accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the safeguards agreement negotiated and signed with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the moves towards the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at its fifty-fourth ordinary session, held at Abuja, in May-June 1991.

(Mr. Reino, Portugal)

In this connection the European Community and its member States wish to welcome the major, positive initiatives in Latin America, such as the Mendoza Declaration by Argentina, Brazil and Chile in September 1991 - to which Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay and Ecuador have acceded - the French decision to ratify the Additional Protocol I of the Tlatelolco Treaty and the recent commitments taken on by Argentina and Brazil establishing full-scope safeguards regimes with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The European Community and its member States also welcome the willingness declared by the Andean countries at Cartagena to renounce weapons of mass destruction in order to transform Latin America and the Caribbean into the first inhabited area of the world free from weapons of mass destruction.

With regard to the Korean Peninsula, the European Community and its member States welcome the ratification of a safeguards agreement with the IAEA by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and look forward to the early implementation of the agreement to allow the IAEA to carry out fully its consequential responsibilities. They also encourage further development in the bilateral arrangements between North Korea and South Korea regarding mutual inspections.

The accession of China to the NPT is also a most welcome reinforcement of the Treaty's regime.

The Twelve are ready to contribute constructively to discussions on this issue, recognizing that regional disarmament covers all types of disarmament, and hope that this year's meeting will make useful progress on the definition of the role of the United Nations in regional disarmament. In the opinion of the Twelve, that role lies in defining and upholding universal principles, encouraging individual regions to take initiatives to solve their own problems and supporting their efforts to this end.

(Mr. Reino, Portugal)

The existence of large arsenals of nuclear weapons and the danger of a further proliferation of nuclear weapons affect the security of all States. Thus, the Twelve consider nuclear disarmament and questions of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, particularly now after the end of the cold war and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, to be one of the most serious challenges, requiring the continuous attention and commitment of all States Members of the United Nations.

The Twelve appreciate the progress that has been made in this field in the past year, notably the strategic arms reduction Treaty (START) and the subsequent initiatives of Presidents Bush and Yeltsin.

They also welcome the recent progress made by the United States and Russia towards further reductions in their nuclear arsenals and encourage their efforts in this direction.

The two nuclear Powers that are members of the European Community have also made a significant contribution to this process by making unilateral reductions of their nuclear weapons.

The Twelve welcome, in particular, the unilateral decisions taken by the United States and the former Soviet Union to eliminate all land-based short-range nuclear weapons and hope that the implementation of these measures will take place in the best possible conditions of security and transparency.

As far as nuclear testing is concerned, and taking into account recent initiatives in this field, the Twelve believe that this issue should continue to be addressed.

The European Community and its member States also attach great importance to the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. They again urge all States that have not yet done so to adhere to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

(Mr. Reino, Portugal)

They welcome the establishment of the science and technology centre in Russia, which will contribute both to disarmament and to non-proliferation objectives. They have already made clear that they will extend substantial support to the centre and they look forward to cooperating with the other States involved to assure its success.

The Twelve are also pleased that some progress was made at the recent IAEA Board of Governors meeting towards strengthening the Agency's safeguards system. They hope that the efforts of the Director General in this regard will be supported by all States.

On the question of the role of science and technology in international security and other related fields, the European Community and its member States recognize the major importance of the role of science in developing the necessary know-how for arms disposal techniques, in particular in the chemical and nuclear fields, in a way which is safe for the populations and the environment and also with a view to converting military industries to civilian purposes. They also consider that science and technology have a most valuable role to play in methods for verification of arms control compliance and disarmament agreements.

The European Community and its member States are convinced, if I may quote resolution 45/61, that

"science and technology can profoundly contribute to solving problems of mankind, especially to promoting its social and economic development".

It is our task to assess the implications of science and technology for international cooperation and peace and security. The aim of the European Community and its member States is to create a situation in which all States wishing to gain access to high technology for development purposes may cooperate within a framework that guarantees security.

(Mr. Reino, Portugal)

In conclusion, the European Community and its member States will make every effort to ensure that this session will be a fruitful one and that the Disarmament Commission, as a recognized deliberative forum for in-depth study in the field of arms control and disarmament within the United Nations, will be able to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session the most significant possible set of concrete recommendations.

Mr. SEIM (Norway): On behalf of my delegation, I have the pleasure to convey to you, Sir, our heartfelt congratulations on your election as Chairman of this session of the Disarmament Commission. It is our hope that our deliberations will take place in a spirit of productive cooperation and that the positive climate which characterized the First Committee at the last session of the General Assembly will continue to prevail.

Norway fully supports the reform programme adopted in 1990 with a view to enhancing the functions of the Disarmament Commission. There can be no doubt that the reform package has strengthened the role of the Disarmament Commission as a deliberative body in the field of disarmament.

The first substantive item on our agenda is the question regarding objective information on military matters. Openness and transparency are essential elements in the broader context of confidence-building measures, arms limitations and disarmament. The improved climate in international relations is a sound basis for continued efforts to promote openness and transparency in all military matters. Greater exchange of information on military expenditures will strengthen international peace and security at the global and regional levels.

(Mr. Seim, Norway)

In recent years, several initiatives have been launched to achieve this end. The most promising result thus far has been the establishment of a United Nations Register of conventional arms. Norway welcomes the Register and we look forward to the report of the expert group on technical procedures for the effective operation of the Register. The Register will promote greater openness in international arms transfers and will help to discourage destabilizing arms build-ups, especially in unstable regions. However, such a Register will only be effective if it is based on universal participation. It is our hope that all States will provide the necessary information spelled out in the Register.

The agenda item on objective information on military matters is the only one which will be concluded at the present session of the Disarmament Commission. We hope that all delegations are prepared to contribute to reaching a successful conclusion. The paper presented last year by the Chairman provides a good point of departure for our discussions.

The next substantive agenda item covers nuclear disarmament. Norway has noted with appreciation the positive developments towards the strengthening of international security. The signing of the strategic arms reduction Treaty (START) was indeed an important event. The recent proposals by President Bush and President Yeltsin concerning further reductions in strategic nuclear arsenals should be followed up by negotiations as soon as possible.

We are gratified to note that a number of States have recently acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The intention of the new republics of the former Soviet Union to accede to the Treaty is also an important step towards universal compliance.

The one-year moratorium on nuclear testing imposed by the Government of Russia and the decision of the Government of France to suspend all nuclear

(Mr. Seim, Norway)

testing for the rest of this year are important steps towards the achievement of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The achievement of a total, permanent ban on all nuclear testing remains an important Norwegian disarmament objective. We view the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban treaty as essential in order effectively to halt the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. A comprehensive test-ban treaty will be an important instrument in preventing any further escalation of arms competition and to contribute to the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons.

Norway earlier voiced concern about the environmental and health risks associated with underground nuclear testing, particularly in ecologically vulnerable environments such as the Arctic. We regard this as an additional and important reason for the discontinuance of all nuclear-test explosions. Only a comprehensive test ban would put an end to the danger of contaminating the environment with radioactive substances released by nuclear explosions.

The General Assembly has repeatedly called for multilateral efforts towards this end. Norway has actively supported this call. We share the view that the most effective way to put an end to nuclear testing is through the conclusion at an early date of a verifiable, comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty that will gain the adherence of all States. The task of seeking agreement on a comprehensive test ban falls mainly on the multilateral negotiating body in Geneva. The Conference on Disarmament has particular responsibilities in the negotiation of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Norway will continue to support the Conference on Disarmament as the appropriate forum for dealing with this issue.

We regret that the Ad Hoc Committee on a nuclear-test ban has not been able to resume its work during this year's session. It is important that the Committee be re-established as soon as possible with an appropriate mandate,

(Mr. Seim, Norway)

as was decided by the General Assembly last year. A prolonged impasse in the test-ban issue within the Conference on Disarmament would give the wrong signals to the preparatory efforts for the next Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

At this year's session of the Disarmament Commission we should try to engage in a discussion of specific areas related to the process of nuclear disarmament. The extended general debate that has characterized the Disarmament Commission's earlier deliberations should be avoided. A more specific approach this year by the Working Group would allow a more in-depth discussion of the issue.

The next substantive agenda item covers regional disarmament. Significant progress has been made in various regions of the world by means of peace, security and cooperation agreements intended to enhance confidence among nations. A number of regional conflicts which originated during the cold war either have been or are being resolved. In other conflicts, such as in the Middle East, a new, arduous process of cooperation has been initiated.

Today, the United Nations has a stronger position than ever before in the management of our collective global responsibilities, as well as in the field of security. However, security will continue to be based on regional cooperation, as provided for in the United Nations Charter. Poverty, environmental degradation and mass migration are forcing countries to work together in the knowledge that our future security must be forged together. Regional solutions can set a precedent for global solutions. The adoption of regional disarmament measures is one of the most effective means by which States can contribute to international security, arms limitation and disarmament. The last substantive item on our agenda is the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other

(Mr. Seim, Norway)

related fields. During last year's result-oriented deliberations, the Working Group managed to reach a consensus report. This report provides the necessary basis for this session's work. It is in the interest of all that the positive momentum from last year be continued during this session.

Experiences gained from the Gulf war demonstrate that there is a need for control of the transfer of high technology products, know-how and services related to weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. Control of weapons technology, particularly nuclear technology, is a global concern which is becoming increasingly urgent. Norms or guidelines for the transfer of technology with military applications should take into account legitimate requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security, while at the same time ensuring that they do not deny access to high-technology products, services and know-how for peaceful purposes. In fact, the exchange of scientific and technological know-how for social and economic development should be encouraged. In addition, technology can be used to enhance the possibilities for verification of compliance with arms control and disarmament agreements.

The multilateral export control regimes established by the Australian Group, the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime support all of these objectives. The sole task of these regimes is to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. With this in mind, the 27 partners of the Nuclear Suppliers Group have recently agreed to implement a multilateral export regime of nuclear-related dual-use materials, equipment and technology in unsafeguarded nuclear programmes or in nuclear weapons programmes.

In the light of growing concern over missile proliferation and in the interests of international peace and security, the participating countries in

(Mr. Seim, Norway)

the Missile Technology Control Regime have appealed to all States to adopt the Guidelines for Sensitive Missile-relevant Transfers of 16 April 1987. The significance of this appeal will certainly be underscored at the next plenary meeting of the Regime, which will take place in Oslo from 29 June to 2 July.

Mr. TUCKER (Bahamas): My delegation extends it congratulations to you, Sir, upon your election as Chairman of the 1992 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. At a time when the world continues to undergo dramatic changes and the prospects for international peace and security seem to be in jeopardy, we are convinced that through your leadership skills, our Commission in the next few weeks will be able to make viable recommendations to build on the progress that has been attained thus far. Our congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau and the Chairmen of the four Working Groups. My delegation would also like to commend the former Chairman, Ambassador Hohenfellner of Austria, for the exemplary way in which he conducted last year's session.

Just as the year 1991 was marked by a myriad of events that impacted significantly on the international community and more so on the work of this Organization, 1992 thus far has presented equal challenges. Events in Eastern Europe, and more so in the former Soviet Union, have presented us with a unique situation. While we all welcome and recognize the Commonwealth of Independent States which evolved out of the former Soviet Union, we can none the less express our concern as to what obstacles it might pose for the ratification and implementation of already-signed treaties and how it will affect further arms control negotiations.

(Mr. Tucker, Bahamas)

In this regard, my delegation welcomes the January disarmament initiatives announced by the President of the Russian Federation in the field of arms limitations and reduction. At the same time, my delegation is saddened by and concerned about the situation in Yugoslavia and hopes that an expeditious solution will be achieved in the interests of peace and democracy.

The settlement of disputes by peaceful means is one of the purposes for which this Organization was founded, as stated in Article 1 of the Charter. The Government of the Bahamas subscribes to this position as part of its foreign policy objectives. In this connection, we fully support the launching of the Middle East peace process, which can be seen as a vital element in the easing of international tensions. It is our express hope that continued progress will be made on the basis of the principles of equality and of respect for the legitimate interests of the parties concerned. We are also encouraged by the result of the referendum held on 17 March 1992 in South Africa, which can be viewed as testimony that the process of dismantling apartheid has aquired an irreversible character and that the citizens of South Africa are striving to attain national reconciliation in the noble task of building upon a non-racial democratic society.

In focusing briefly on events in our region, Latin America and the Caribbean, we see that the events of the past six months have brought both successes and concerns. Late last year the region was stunned by events in the Republic of Haiti, which culminated in the forcible overthrow of the democratically elected Government and the forcible exile of the President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Also, just as nations of the region were celebrating the successful conclusion and signing of the New York Act by the Government

(Mr. Tucker, Bahamas)

of El Salvador and the FMLN, thus ending 12 years of civil war, the cease-fire that went into effect on 1 February 1992 was overshadowed by events in our sister nation of Venezuela, where an attempt was made to overthrow the democratic Government of President Carlos Andres Perez on 3 and 4 February. My delegation was thus relieved at the successful suppression of the revolt and welcomes the triumph of constitutional order in Venezuela.

The foregoing events clearly demonstrate that, despite the present dramatic progress being made to achieve political stability, thus leading to global peace and security, major problems still persist and are reaching their boiling points, thereby threatening to undermine the progress already made. Member States must look more closely at the factors perpetuating such events and address them in the context in which they are presented.

At the first-ever summit-level meeting of the Security Council, held on 31 January 1992, leaders of 15 Member States undertook

> "to work in close cooperation with other United Nations Member States in their own efforts to achieve this, as well as to address urgently all the other problems, in particular those of economic and social development, requiring the collective response of the international community" (S/PV.3046, pp. 146-147).

The United Nations has been given a greater opportunity than at any time in its history to play its intended role as the centrepiece of the international collective security system.

> "Cooperative security, keeping the peace, fostering voluntary democratic change and promoting respect for human rights",

in the words of William Durch and Barry Blechman in their report "Keeping the Peace: The United Nations in the Emerging World Order", must be the guiding

(Mr. Tucker, Bahamas)

principles for the United Nations in this final decade of the twentieth century.

At this juncture, I should like to make some brief remarks concerning our agenda for the 1992 substantive session. The 1991 session, meeting for the first time under its new reform programme, was able, after intensive discussions, to arrive at consensus on three of the four agenda items - items 4, 5 and 6. Discussions were approached from a brain-storming yet serious perspective, as was reflected in the various working papers and proposals presented by delegations. Since the last session my delegation has had the opportunity to study more closely the various proposals and has found them to be extremely useful, especially those submitted under items 6 and 7.

Recent events have illustrated graphically the long-term effects when the transfer, sale and exchange of arms go on unchecked and unabated. It is further evident that the relaxation in East-West tension and recent developments have not thus far had a dramatic effect with respect to reduction of armaments and the military budgets of States. In fact, recent events have led to a renewed concern by States about their security and ways to preserve and protect it.

As we conclude our deliberations on agenda item 4, "Question of objective information on military matters", at this session, the idea of how to promote openness and transparency in arms transfers must be advanced. Recent studies have shown that, in spite of the Gulf crisis, arms sales are up and military budgets have not decreased substantially, thereby further depleting resources that could be used for economic and social needs. Resolution 46/36 L, adopted by the General Assembly at the forty-sixth session, recognizes in its first preambular paragraph that

(Mr. Tucker, Bahamas)

"excessive and destabilizing arms build-ups pose a threat to national, regional and international peace and security, particularly by aggravating tensions and conflict situations, giving rise to serious and urgent concerns".

Therefore, we can only hope that the recently established Register, which went into effect on 1 January of this year, the details of which are outlined in the annex to the resolution, will lead to effective measures by Member States in addressing this issue.

The nuclear-arms race is usually linked with the cold war, as is nuclear-arms control. From a historical perspective, a great chance to put a leash on nuclear weapons was lost in 1946-1947, for a variety of reasons. The recent events of 1990-1991 in a sense have created a situation in which the world is afforded a second chance to contain the danger of nuclear weapons and prevent planetary sucicide. We have seen much progress over the past few years in the field of nuclear-arms control. In the past year the Non-Proliferation Treaty regime has been strengthened, with at least five Member States acceeding to the Treaty; unilateral and bilateral decisions have been taken by the two major nuclear-weapon States; and a joint declaration on a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula, along with an agreement on reconciliation, non-aggression, exchange and cooperation, has been signed by the Governments of the two Koreas.

One of the major successes in the field of nuclear non-proliferation thus far, however, has been the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. In its preamble the States Parties pledge their desire

(Mr. Tucker, Bahamas)

"to contribute, so far as lies in their power, towards ending the armaments race, especially in the field of nuclear weapons, and towards strengthening a world at peace, based on the sovereign equality of States, mutual respect and good-neighbourliness". (A/C.1/946, p. 2)

My country remains resolutely committed to the principles and objectives espoused in the Treaty. Therefore, it is with deep satisfaction that today we share in the celebrations of the Treaty's twenty-fifth anniversary.

Despite the above, we are cognisant of the fact that more still needs to be done in the area of nuclear non-proliferation. Therefore, as we commence our second year of deliberations on item 5, "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons", we reiterate the importance of this item's remaining at the top of the disarmament agenda. Non-nuclear-weapon States especially must remain confident that nuclear-weapon States share the same concerns for a world free of nuclear weapons.

My delegation attaches great importance to agenda item 6, "Regional approach to disarmament within the contex of global security", especially in the light of recent political developments in our region in the past months. Although we are situated in a region that has enjoyed relative peace throughout its history, the changing times have shown us that no region is now immune from political conflicts and threats to its national security, even from internal forces. In response to these developments, Caribbean Heads of Government, at their Third Inter-sessional Conference, held at Kingston, Jamaica, on 19 February 1992, proposed the establishment of a regional security scheme for the Community to address security concerns. The proposed scheme is to incorporate the existing regional security scheme for the Eastern

(Mr. Tucker, Bahamas)

Caribbean, with links by means of cooperation agreements with other member States of the Community. A ministeral committee has been given the mandate to finalize the structure of, and other arrangements for, the operation of the expanded security system for adoption by the Conference.

The discussions on this item at the last session provided an interesting debate, and many divergent views were expressed with respect to the relationship between regional disarmament and global security and arms limitation and disarmament; principles and guidelines; ways and means; machineries and modalities; and the role of the United Nations. My delegation again intends to follow closely the discussions on this item.

Access to scientific and technological innovations has generated much debate over the past years, especially concerning their acquisition, transfers and dual usage. The vast possibilities that scientific and technological progress offers for supporting disarmament negotiations and implementing their results, inter alia, in the fields of verification, of compliance with agreements in arms limitations and disarmament as well as conversion of military industry to civilian production, have been recognized. Further, consideration has been given to the concept that science and technology can profoundly contribute to solving the problems of mankind, especially to promoting its social and economic development. In this context, my delegation shares the view that no State should be denied access to scientific and technological capabilities.

(Mr. Tucker, Bahamas)

However, we are opposed to such technologies' being used for other than peaceful purposes since that poses a direct threat to peace and security. In this regard, we support the proposals put forward at the last session which sought to establish universally acceptable international norms or guidelines that would regulate international transfers of sensitive technologies while ensuring that such norms do not deny access to high-technology products, services and know-how for peaceful purposes. My delegation looks forward to the continued discussions on this item, which at the previous session were characterized as complex, wide-ranging and challenging.

The world is at a crucial point in its history. The challenges and pressures that continue to be placed on the political, economic and social fibres of societies grow as I speak. We continually see success being offset by setbacks which then require new strategies to address these sometimes unpredictable and miscalculated events.

As we speak of a new world order, which has yet to be clearly defined, new concepts of what constitutes democracy and sovereignty are being put forward. Poverty, economic inequalities, environmental degradation and human rights abuses persist. In the next three weeks, under our mandate from the Final Document of the first Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament, we shall continue our deliberations with the objective of formulating recommendations that will serve as the basis for directing the United Nations work in the maintenance of international peace and security and disarmament. My delegation pledges its full cooperation.

Mr. ACHARYA (Nepal): Allow me to extend to you, Sir, the warm congratulations of my delegation on your unanimous election to the chairmanship of the United Nations Disarmament Commission for the 1992 session. It is indeed satisfying to see so experienced a diplomat as you, active in many important areas of United Nations activities, guiding our work this year.

I wish also to convey my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner of Austria for his skillful leadership of the Commission at its 1991 session.

The Disarmament Commission is once again meeting at a time of momentous changes in international relations. Periods of transition are also periods of concern, and the present is fraught with uncertainties as to the shape of things to come. The uncertainties, however, have not dampened hopes for a new era. The threat of a nuclear holocaust continues to recede. Familiar concepts of ideological rivalries and the concommitant military alliances have become outdated. Democracy and human rights are becoming inalienable parts of human life around the world. Continents have come closer still, and events in one region have profound effects on the other regions.

We have witnessed the destabilizing effects of the development and proliferation of sophisticated weapons of mass destruction. This has further underscored the indivisible relationship between international security and international political, economic and environmental stability. My delegation hopes that the unfolding process will establish a new framework of cooperation, not only between what used to be called the East and the West, but also between developed and developing countries.

(Mr. Acharya, Nepal)

I wish now to turn to the current substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. My delegation is satisfied with the implementation of the decisions concerning reform of this forum. The reforms made possible a focused discussion of the items on our agenda at the 1991 session, and we are confident that this healthy trend will continue this year.

This session will be the last for the discussion of the item on objective information on military matters. The Working Group on this item has achieved important progress, Sir, under your able chairmanship during the last session. My delegation views this agenda item as an important confidence- and security-building measure. We look forward to a compilation of definitive principles and guidelines reflecting universally acceptable positions.

Important developments have taken place in the field of nuclear disarmament since last year. The signing of the START Treaty has been followed by important unilateral announcements, both in the United States and the Russian Federation. We welcome the accession by China to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Likewise, my delegation welcomes the announcement by France that it will do the same and will accept a moratorium on nuclear tests in 1992.

At the 1991 session, the Chairman of Working Group II, on nuclear disarmament, made very serious efforts to lay the groundwork for progress in this important area. We welcome the intention of the Chairman of Working Group II to try to build on the results of the last session. It is a complex matter, but the changes in the international situation have raised further fundamental questions about the value of the continued maintenance of huge

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nuclear arsenals. In the interest of collective security, it is time that the nuclear-weapon States displayed the political will to realize the global aspiration for a nuclear-weapons-free world.

My delegation hopes that, this year, Working Group III will try to build on, and expand the outcome of, last year's session. We believe that the regional aspects of disarmament and security have an impact on the global situation. To be effective, regional approaches have to be made with the participation of the States of the region concerned and taking into consideration the characteristics of each region.

Achievements in one region may not be automatically transferable to another region, but they can serve as examples. As in the case of the development of guidelines for objective information on military matters, the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament can also play important roles in building regional approaches to disarmament. In this context, I wish to recall the informal but important exchange of views at the meeting of the Regional Centre fo Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific held in Kathmandu in January this year.

During the last session, Working Group IV, under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Castro of Brazil, identified broad areas for this session to focus on. Science and technology hold immense promise for enhancing peace and security by promoting development, especially in the developing countries. My delegation hopes that the deliberations at the United Nations Disarmament Commission will help in developing guidelines that address the legitimate concerns both of suppliers and of recipients.

(Mr. Acharya, Nepal)

The items on the agenda of the Disarmament Commission at this session have an important bearing on the future of the disarmament process. My delegation hopes that the 1992 session will further strengthen the spirit of cooperation on these important issues and enhance the role of the Commission in the multilateral disarmament agenda.

Ms. RIVERA (Costa Rica) (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the Costa Rican delegation, I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and your colleagues on the Bureau on your election to your respective posts. I wish all of you every success in this prestigious and respected body, the United Nations Disarmament Commission. I assure you of my delegation's sincere support in the accomplishment of your important work.

The atmosphere in which this session of the Disarmament Commission is taking place is conducive to the promotion of new initiatives in this field. We have entered a new era in international relations, an era in which disarmament has become one of the most important issues of the decade of the 1990s. That is why we need to give it its rightful place, to have it considered as one of the priority elements in the building of a new world order of peace, security and cooperation which can strengthen the economic and social development of all peoples the world over.

We believe that the attainment of this goal will depend completely on the efforts that States make in the processes of regional and global disarmament aimed at reaching arms control and arms reduction agreements and disarmament which can promote a greater transparency and openness of objective information on military matters and which can also lay the foundations for a new model of security that includes broad measures to regulate the production, stockpiling, reduction, conversion and balance of weapons and armed forces as well as research in this field.

There are signs that we are coming closer to the achievement of this goal as a result of the profound changes that have taken place on the world scene in recent years. It is obvious that the world wants the structures of the new world order to take shape with a view to strengthening the foundations of a

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fundamentally new security system based on confidence and cooperation. This can happen only with the active participation of all nations - large, medium-sized and small.

A clear reflection of this is the United Nations, which is called upon now more than at any other time in its history to work collectively against aggression, to mediate conflicts, to maintain peace, to defend human rights. Furthermore, it is now possible, indeed necessary, to broaden the Organization's functions in regard to arms limitation and disarmament, because of the recent establishment of the register of conventional armaments, maintained at the Headquarters of the United Nations.

My delegation attaches great importance to all the substantive items on the Commission's agenda, but we are particularly interested in the following items: regional approach to disarmament within the context of global security and other related spheres, and objective information on military matters and its relationship to international security and disarmament.

Regional disarmament is a priority in the world of today because it is one of the fundamental elements for strengthening global efforts to achieve peace. We are convinced of the importance of promoting regional disarmament measures, taken upon the initiative and with the participation of all the States concerned. Such measures should take into account the special characteristics of the region and should be consonant with the principle of reasonable security, reducing weapons and armed forces to the lowest possible level in order to improve the social conditions of peoples without jeopardizing national dignity and sovereignty.

One of the major advances which it is important to recognize and which my delegation supports is the decision taken at the eleventh summit meeting of the Central American Presidents, which adopted the Tegucigalpa Protocol,

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affirming the wish of those States to design a model of regional security based on a reasonable balance of forces and on the strengthening of civilian rule. We have no doubt that this important contribution will help to lay the foundations of a new world order of peace, security and cooperation. A clear example of the shaping of this model is to be found in the regional disarmament efforts being made in Central America. The Esquipulas process established two historic stages for the attainment of regional peace. One stage is the promotion of an internal solution to the Central American conflict, through the democratic channel of national reconciliation; the other is the laying of the necessary foundations for the establishment of the Security Commission as the organ with the task of drawing up the guidelines for the achievement of regional disarmament, with a view to concluding an agreement on security, verification, and limitation of weapons and forces in the region.

That is why Costa Rica has supported the efforts made by the Security Commission, which decided to establish a technical subcommittee to draft a model for the drawing up of military inventories. The subcommittee has also defined the elements required to establish a proportional balance of forces in the region, and it has set up machinery for the verification of the inventories drawn up by the five Central American States, with the assistance of the United Nations and the Organization of American States. The results have already begun to appear: Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Honduras have deposited their inventories with those two organizations; they will be opened once all the inventories have been submitted.

Similarly, we support the efforts towards national reconciliation made by Guatemala, through the plan for comprehensive peace, and the agreement in

(Ms. Rivera, Costa Rica)

El Salvador, which will undoubtedly make it possible quickly to fulfil the goal set by the Security Commission.

The factors which I have just set out relate also to another item of interest to Costa Rica: objective information on military matters. We believe that the recent establishment of the register of conventional armaments falls within this line of thinking, since its goal is to promote greater access to objective information, and transparency and moderation in the area of weaponry.

My delegation has shown great interest in this item since 1989, when it submitted to the Disarmament Commission working paper A/CN.10/125, paragraph 6 F of which pointed for the first time to the need to initiate work on the establishment of an international register of conventional armaments and their transfers, within the United Nations Secretariat. That is why we supported and co-sponsored the relevant draft resolution submitted at the last session of the General Assembly. But we believe that the register must be broadened in order to contribute to the strengthening of confidence. We agree that the register should include objective quantitative and qualitative information on military matters supplied by large, medium-sized and small States, so that the register can be universal and non-discriminatory. Similarly, we believe that consideration must be given to incorporating broad measures regulating the production, stockpiling, reduction, conversion and balance of armaments and armed forces.

(Ms Rivera, Costa Rica)

Accordingly, we believe it is necessary to promote greater openness and transparency among States by incorporating in the Register objective information on the policies, procedures and agreements entered into by States at the national and regional levels in the following areas: first, production, stockpiling and distribution of arms; secondly, assistance in military technology; thirdly, reduction, conversion and listing of armaments, armed forces and military expenditures; fourthly, control, limitation and reduction of arms and disarmament; and, fifthly, prevention of illicit arms trafficking.

We believe that the above-mentioned aspects could lay the foundations for promoting a new model of international security leading to the establishment of a reasonable balance of arms and military personnel by reducing them to the lowest possible level. They would also make it possible to pursue efforts to bring about negotiations on security, verification and arms control and reduction, with a view to the signing of agreements in this important field.

In conclusion, I should like to quote part of the statement made in the General Assembly by our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Niehaus Quesada, as follows:

> "All States and all men have the opportunity and the responsibility to make those dreams come true, to participate in the building of a new world, a new international order, and the United Nations, as the coordinator of those efforts, as the embodiment of the spirit of brotherhood that should guide mankind, must play the decisive role of designing and building the shining destiny opening up before us. Let us all contribute to making it a reality." (A/46/PV.11, p. 58)

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: There are no further speakers for this afternoon's meeting.

Tomorrow morning's meeting will not be as short, since we have some 14 speakers; in the afternoon there are 17. For that reason, I would ask members to attend the meetings punctually. I should also like to express my thanks to all those delegations that heeded my appeal and inscribed their names on the list of speakers for this afternoon.

Ihe next plenary meeting will be held tomorrow morning, Tuesday, 21 April, at 10 o'clock - at 10, I repeat, and not at 10.30 - to continue the general exchange of views, and in view of the long list of speakers, I urge all members to be punctual.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.